

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Tanya Asman, Laura Beck, Andrew Bernish, Eric Brenner, Virginia Burke, Nate Evans, Josh Feldmark, Nathan George, Steven Green, Cole Greene, Scott Hansen, John Hartline, Chris Hersl, Meredith Hill, Greg Hinchliffe, Carol Kachadoorian, Jon Korin, Andrea Lasker, Gerald Lynott, Patrick McMahon, Diane Patterson, Erin Penniston, Peter Sotherland, John Wetmore

I. Welcome/Introductions

Eric Brenner, Chair of MBPAC, opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. He recapped the previous MBPAC meeting, which occurred on June 23rd in Dorchester County and thanked the committee for its participation in the event. Organizers of the meeting from Dorchester County, which included a panel discussion and visit to the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Park, reported that the meeting was successful.

II. Bike Map Updates

Peter Sotherland, Acting Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, MDOT SHA, provided an update on the Bicycle Spine Network Map efforts. The update included a general overview of the project for members who may not have been familiar with the project. Peter explained that the map is to serve as a mapping of the spine network of biking routes throughout the state. The main objective of the map is to identify the safety and reliability of the state bike network regardless of road/path ownership. The routes mapped are not provided to connect each local point of interest, but rather to link one local area/town to another and, in so doing, provide linkages to local routes. Those local routes, in turn, provide the connections to local points of interest. It is 'scaled out' to a state context versus detailed local routes. The map will contain two parts, an electronic/online version and a static paper (PDF) version. The project involves partnering with MDOT and the MD Office of Tourism at the state level initially and subsequently working with local jurisdictions.

Peter reported that currently the map project is in the process of collecting comments from local jurisdictions and advocacy groups. The initial deadline for this portion of the project has been extended. The goal is to have the spine network, inclusive of all comments, finalized by mid-fall. The subsequent phase will involve more of the tourism aspect in which the strategy is developed for creating the most effective print map. To this point, Peter reported that the Office of Tourism has broken down regions for which the print maps will highlight and Heather Ersts is leading the efforts from the MD Office of Tourism. The printed maps will be regionally available as hardcopies and posted online as a downloadable PDF. Peter reported that the response to the spine network thus far has been "pretty good."

Peter answered questions raised during the update.

- *Are the comments received during this phase being responded to individually?*

Peter responded that there will be some form of response to every comment. This may not mean that each comment is responded to directly, but rather the map will be incorporative of all issues raised from comments.

- *Jon Korin reported that BMC is currently sponsoring a GIS-biking planning map and asked if the committee was aware of this map and how this map would differ from the spine network map being developed from the committee.*

Peter responded that his understanding was that the map being developed by the BMC was more of a “planning map” and the anticipated audience was more ‘inward-facing’ whereas the spine network map would be more geared toward the public via the MD Office of Tourism. However, with the spine network map would also have an element that will be used for internal, or ‘planning purposes,’ as well. Regardless many of the routes on the spine network will also be on the map generated by the BMC so the committee should be aware of the progress made on the map by the BMC. To this point, the BMC map has received data from several local jurisdictions.

III. Bike Safety Taskforce Update

Meredith Hill from MDOT TSO’s Office of Planning and Capital Programming (OPCP) provided a brief overview of the origin of this taskforce and noted that it came out of legislation and will be staffed by MDOT TSO’s OCP. Peter Sotherland is MDOT SHA’s Administrator designee. The timeline for the report is short as the report is due back to legislatures by December of 2017. Tentatively there are plans for a four-meeting schedule that will look at safety, network, and other critical areas.

Eric Brenner noted the short turnaround time for the task force, and suggested that whatever issues the task force takes on, they try to use their time efficiently (no duplication) as it relates to the October 20 MBPAC meeting with the lead county bike/pedestrian staffers.

IV. MDOT – MTA Report

(See PowerPoint Presentation)

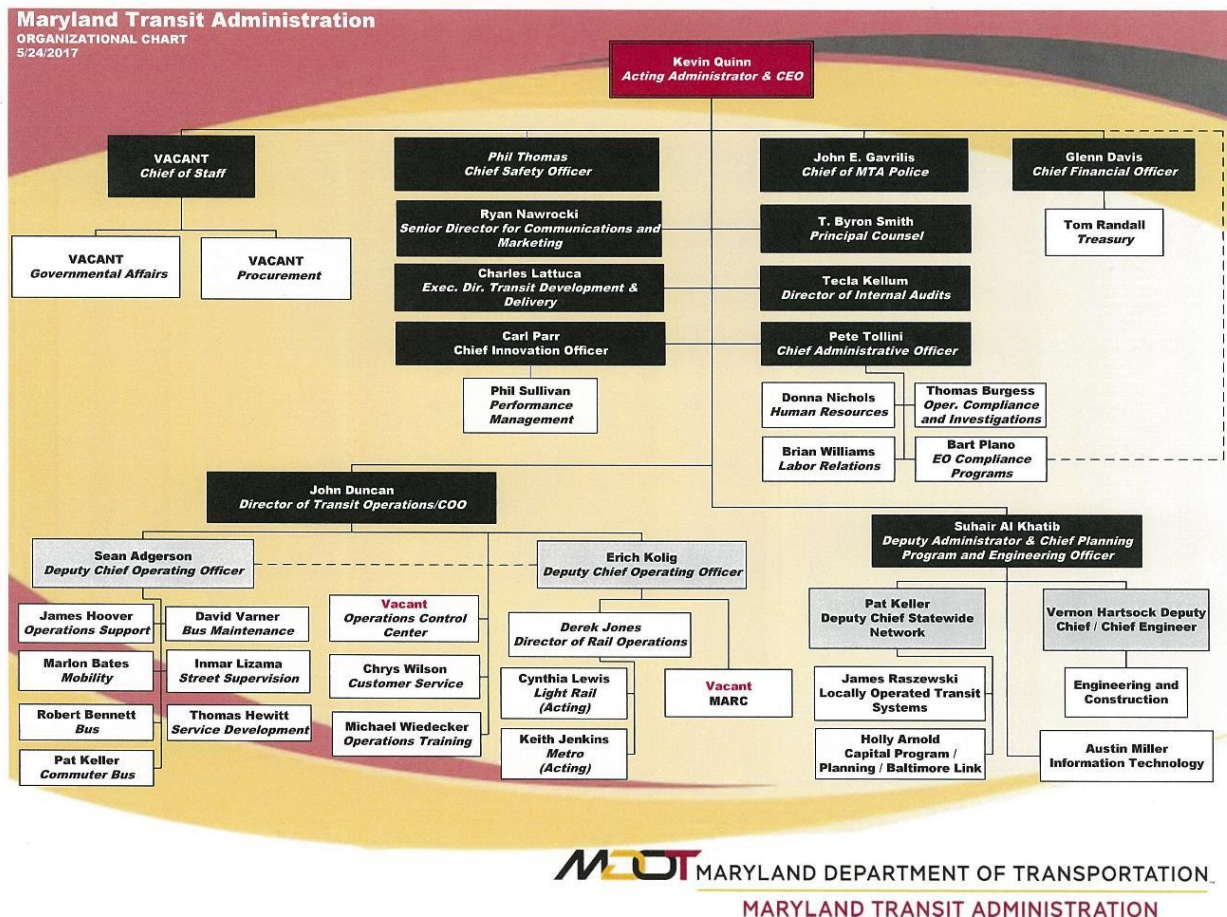
A. MTA Structure, Offices, Roles, Vision

Patrick McMahon, Sustainability Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner with MDOT MTA, provided an overview of MTA’s structure and offices, roles and vision. MTA is divided into an office of planning & programming, an office of service development, an office of engineering, and an office of safety, quality assurance, and risk management. See organizational chart below

B. MTA Bicycle and Pedestrian Efforts

The vision for the bicycle and pedestrian aspects of planning within MTA is for first and last mile connections in a way that can extend the reach of transit. This vision has been aided by allowing bicycles on the Baltimore Subway and Light Rail and through bicycle

infrastructure at many transit stations. Additionally, every bus in the Baltimore region has been equipped with a front bike rack so passengers can attach their bike to the bus. There are around 250,000 regular daily bus riders in the Baltimore region. \$6 million in funding has been secured for five miles of dedicated bus/bike lanes in downtown Baltimore.



C. Baltimore-Link

Patrick provided an overview of the recently-launched Baltimore-Link bus service. Twelve of the busiest routes in the Baltimore region have been assigned a color instead of a number. These routes provide 24-hour service and were mainly derived from previously-numbered routes that largely developed from old streetcar lines. MTA did consider assigning colors to *more* than the 12 busiest routes, but decided to stop at 12 in part due to the fact that it could cause confusion with the lack of disparity among 12+ colors in a palette (similar colors may blur easy branding efforts). The 12 routes also provide suburban connectivity as well as connectivity from all geographical directions radiant from Baltimore City. Patrick explained that the remaining bus lines, which are the numbered routes, are in a system in which the farther you are from downtown, and closer to the I-695 beltline, the number is higher. There is also a clockwise pattern to the numbering

of the bus routes that was designed in a logical pattern, but Patrick admitted that the distilling of this information to the public through over 300 community meetings has not been without its challenges. Given the fact that there are over 250,000 daily bus riders in the region, you cannot easily reach all the bus riders to provide this information. Patrick reported that during the initial rollout of the Baltimore-Link system, MDOT had volunteers stationed throughout the Baltimore region to help answer questions that arose due to the transition from numbered routes to colored routes. Patrick believes that although the transition was recent, more regular commuters are now settling into the system.

D. Bicycle Parking at Stations

Patrick reported that many of the challenges with linking bicycling to mass transit have been with the details of each individual's commute. Different patterns and desires of cyclists at transit stations need to be addressed. Bicycle commuters' preferences vary to include bikeshare, locking bikes at the station by day, locking bikes overnight, and taking their bikes on transit. This range of options can result in wasteful spending if proper anticipatory planning is not conducted. For instance, bike lockers were initially installed at every stop along the Baltimore metro, but these lockers have rarely been used because metro riders can take their bikes with them on the metro. Patrick stressed the need to figure out what the correct profile is for cyclists at each station so resources are not wasted. To this end, MTA is now undergoing a process to identify the stations that need better bicycle parking and target resources to provide covered bike parking at key stations. There are currently 83 MTA stations and 40 do not have bike racks. Patrick noted that MBPAC could help inform preferences of riders for certain locking options at each station.

E. Baltimore Bikeshare

The Baltimore Bikeshare program officially launched in October of 2016. There are currently seven bikeshare stations at MTA rail stations with another six planned. The data is culled from GPS on each bike. Currently the data is coming out in a text file that requires considerable post-processing in Excel and ArcGIS. This initial bikeshare data, representing launch through mid-2017, is currently being analyzed by a bikeshare committee/technical task force and through a grant with Morgan State University. Aggregate-level data is currently provided at the bottom of the Baltimore bikeshare webpage. Theft of bikes from the bikeshare has been a problem. This has occurred despite being anticipated to a certain degree prior to the bikeshare launch. The measures that were initially put in place to reduce theft have been compromised to some extent and a new fix has been developed but has not yet been implemented system-wide. Implementation will require retrofitting the stations and bikes. Patrick did report that the GPS units on the bikes have helped with the thefts to some degree as the stolen bikes have been able to be tracked.

F. Bicycle Access to Rail Stations

Patrick discussed various rail stations that have been recent targets for improved bicycle access. One such rail station is the Warren Road station on the light rail. The area from this station to the southern terminus of the NCR trail is now a priority for improving bicycle access and Patrick reported that most of the street ROW on for this access is state-owned and thus potentially could provide more expeditious implementation of on-the-ground bicycle improvements. In addition, nearly 15% of planning for this area has already been done. The committee pointed out that this area could be a choice location for a future Bikeways application. Patrick noted that MBPAC could help build local support for projects like this and the extension of the BWI loop trail to the North Linthicum light rail station and eventually connecting to shared use paths extending south from Baltimore City.

G. MARC Bike Racks on Passenger Cars

Patrick provided an update on the progress of equipping all MARC trains along the Penn line with bike racks. The target date of fall of 2017 has been moved back to spring of 2018 with the first cars to likely begin installing the bike racks this month. The plan is to install two bike racks on every car and thus, in a typical MARC train, there will be spots available for a dozen bikes (six cars with two racks each). The rollout will be somewhat gradual as the four different types of MARC trains will have racks installed at different times and no public announcement will be made until all the cars on all of the trains have the racks installed. One large concern about this rollout is the anticipation that there will be more demand than space for bikes – at least initially. MTA is working on implementing some sort of pressure-alert system in which a bike placed on a rack triggers a sensor that lights up an indicator outside of the train (ideally in the station) indicating that the rack is being used. This will be helpful to bike commuters to alert them that the racks are full *before* they board the train. Potential for advancing this system to an online app could occur once the initial implementation has been successfully implemented.

Patrick answered questions raised during and after the presentation.

- *To what extent is MTA working with Baltimore City regarding bikeshare?*

MTA has provided more infrastructure, engineering work, and property/location than perhaps initially anticipated. In addition, the siting of bikeshare stations near MTA stations (bus, rail) has required more coordination with MTA, especially in lower income areas, in an effort to connect bikes to transit. In this regard, MTA has acted as an intermediary between the state and the city of Baltimore.

- *How is Bikeshare promoting economic equity or targeting populations who do not typically choose biking as a means of transportation?*

Downtown Partnership of Baltimore City has worked to make some bikeshare service more affordable for qualifying individuals. There is currently a system in place in which monthly

bikeshare memberships are discounted for qualifying individuals (\$3 a month). There is also a system in place to obtain certain bikeshare memberships with cash through the MTA store.

- *May you describe the ongoing funding structure for Bikeshare in Baltimore?*

There is not a lot of funding right now for operating costs of the bikeshare. Most of the funding procured has been capital funding provided for the launch. TIGER grant funding will be providing some additional stations.

- *Where are the new stations planned and how are decisions made for station placement?*

The main question about expanding the bikeshare stations is how to keep the necessary density for bikeshare and still keep the tourism pieces (i.e., the one-time users who essentially subsidize the memberships) in place. Patrick discussed some challenges of bikeshare placement including cross-ownership of property at Penn Station (Federal via Amtrak versus municipal), more 'remote' stations, and the desire to pair stations with infrastructure. Penn Station has been the most requested location for a station.

- *What indication have you seen from local jurisdictions to help secure or maintain bicycle infrastructure? For instance, has Baltimore County evidenced any outward support for improving rail access from the Warren Road light rail station to the southern terminus of the NCR trail?*

Local jurisdictions have offered varying degrees of support for both implementation and maintenance of bicycle facilities. For instance, the side path along Belle Grove avenue in Anne Arundel county has not been maintained very consistently by the county. Ft. Meade has recently opened its facilities to bike commuters in and around the Odenton MARC station by providing bike commuters with lockers. This MARC station has around 500 daily commuters who drive less than two miles by car and thus efforts are being made to make Odenton more transit-accessible and encourage commuters to take other means of transit to the station. Patrick reported that he was not aware of any current advocacy from Baltimore County for implementing improved bicycle infrastructure from Warren Road light rail stop to the NCR trail.

V. Committee Members' Updates

A. Maryland Department of Health (Erin Penniston)

The MD Department of Health is currently working on *Walk to School Day*, which is scheduled for October 4th to coincide with *Walk to Work Day*. This is the 3rd year in a row for this event and the Department is working on messaging and communication for the pedestrian aspects. Last year, the Lieutenant Governor participated in *Walk to School Day* in Annapolis. There are currently no legislative leaders scheduled to participate this year, but the Department is certainly open to involving leaders if approached. Eric Brenner noted that within Washington, DC public schools there is a movement to require students to learn to ride their bikes

B. Maryland Department of Planning (Scott Hansen)

Bikeways applications are being reviewed along with Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas applications. Scott mentioned that there has been some discussion of placing a bikeshare location at state center and to this end there has been some outreach between MDP and MTA, but to date no station has been planned, in part, due to DGS reluctance to have a station on state ground at the State Center.

C. Southern Maryland (John Hartline)

The Southern Maryland Bike-Pedestrian Advisory Council Executive Board approved their 7th meeting in March and the meeting occurred in July. For Bike to Work Day this year, this Board provided arm bands and lit bracelets. Bike to Work Day coincided with Senior Day this year and the board purchased lit bracelets for seniors to wear to indicate to the public that they were walking/biking. The Southern Maryland Bike-Pedestrian Advisory Council is also currently working with area restaurants to promote biking home from restaurants in the evening.

D. Western Maryland (Steven Green)

Taste of Garrett just occurred and there was an accompanying bike ride coincident. It was a success. Western Maryland bicycle interests are working to secure some trail connections including Meadow Mountain Phase II of the Deep Creek State Park.

E. Prince George's County (Andrea Lasker)

Capital Bikeshare is set to launch in Prince George's county in the Spring of 2018, but they are looking for additional funding from MDOT. Prince George's County also now has a bicycle-pedestrian coordinator, Karyn McAlister.

F. Baltimore City (Greg Hinchliffe)

Greg provided a brief review of the Potomac Cycle Track case in Baltimore City. The cycle track was installed with a combination of state and federal funding. Subsequently, after pressure from residents along the track, the track was ordered to be removed by Baltimore City Mayor Pugh. The rationale behind the removal was implementation of the international fire code requiring public streets have at least 20 feet of open road space for fire vehicles to turn around. However, this code is generally not followed verbatim in many streets in the city or in other jurisdictions largely because it would force the removal of street parking in many areas and its implementation is not always feasible in older city streets. Prior to the removal, lawyers hired by the local bicycling advocacy group, Bikemore, successfully had the removal stopped by a Baltimore City judge. Currently the status is uncertain with more meetings to occur. Greg reviewed recent news about the Potomac Avenue Cycle Track including information about how state (Bikeways) and federal (TAP) funding may have had to be returned if the cycle track was removed and thus federal and state have had a role in this ostensibly local issue. In addition, the case has received some national press (City Lab). The committee

discussed the applicability of the case for other jurisdictions including Silver Spring, which is planning an installation of several protected bike lanes.

VI. Upcoming Events/Dates/Locations for next meetings

Eric Brenner, Chair of MBPAC, reported that there are two upcoming dates:

- September 8th at 9:30am will be hosted by the Maryland Aviation Administration. The meeting will take place will include a discussion of Bicycle and Pedestrian Efforts at the Airport, BWI Airport and will occur Assembly Room A|B – 3rd Floor of the Terminal Building
- October 20th will be a Pedestrian and Bicycle Roundtable and will require a RSVP. It will be limited to 100 participants and catering will likely be provided by AARP. The location will be the Maryland State Offices in Crownsville.